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Security Council

Fiftieth Year

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Friday, 15 September 1995, 12.20 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Fulci	(Italy)
Members:	Argentina	Ms. Cañas
	Botswana	Mr. Legwaila
	China	Mr. Wang Xuexian
	Czech Republic	Mr. Kovanda
	France	Mr. Mérimée
	Germany	Mr. Henze
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Thayeb
	Nigeria	Mr. Egunsola
	Oman	Mr. Al-Sameen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Fedotov
	Rwanda	Mr. Bakuramutsa
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in Liberia

Twelfth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (S/1995/781)

95-85981 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Section, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 12.25 p.m.

Expression of farewell to Mr. Jean-Bernard Mérimée, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

The President: Before we start our proceedings I wish, on behalf of all the members of the Security Council, to bid a fond farewell to our dear colleague Ambassador Jean-Bernard Mérimée, who, I am sad to say, is leaving New York for his new post as Ambassador of France to Italy.

Here in the Council we shall all miss his enlightened presence. His presidency of the Council in the month of May was a paragon of judiciousness, efficiency and, above all, wit and good humour. In my own work, during the current month, I have found myself constantly looking back to the way he conducted our proceedings, and to his innovative approach to the delicate and critical matters which are always before us.

But, if I may speak as Ambassador of Italy, the Security Council's loss is Italy's gain, for I know that in my capital the very high qualities that we have been so privileged to enjoy will be equally appreciated.

Mr. Mérimée (France) *(interpretation from French):* I had not expected such words of praise, Mr. President, and I thank you for them. Since the work of the Security Council is a collective endeavour, everything you have said would not have been possible without the assistance that I have received from all the members of the Council. Once again, I thank everyone from the bottom of my heart.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Liberia

Twelfth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (S/1995/781)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Ghana and Liberia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lamptey (Ghana) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the twelfth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (S/1995/781).

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1995/790, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I should like to draw attention to the following revision to be made to the draft resolution contained in document S/1995/790, in its provisional form. The eighth preambular paragraph should read as follows:

> "*Emphasizing* the need for all the Liberian parties to respect and implement fully all the agreements and commitments they have entered into, in particular with regard to the maintenance of the cease-fire, disarmament and demobilization of combatants, and national reconciliation".

I should also like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to the following other documents: S/1995/742, letter dated 25 August 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the text of the "Abuja Agreement to supplement the Cotonou and Akosombo Agreements as subsequently clarified by the Accra Agreement"; and S/1995/756, letter dated 30 August 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations transmitting the text of a letter dated 28 August 1995 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ghana addressed to the Secretary-General, enclosing the text of the "Abuja Agreement to supplement the Cotonou and

Accra Agreements as subsequently clarified by the Accra Agreement".

The first speaker is the representative of Ghana. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Lamptey (Ghana): I am honoured to speak before the Security Council today, and I thank you, Sir, for that honour.

My Government has deemed it proper that I should bring before the Council the positive developments in the Liberian peace process and the enormous financial and material resources that would be needed for the permanent establishment of peace and ordered civil life in that country, as the Council considers the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL).

On 19 August 1995 the Abuja Agreement on Liberia was signed by all the Liberian parties, both military and civilian, to supplement the Cotonou and Akosombo Agreements, as subsequently clarified by the Accra Agreement.

Following this significant achievement, a cease-fire went into effect throughout Liberia at midnight on 26 August 1995. To date there has been no major violation of the cease-fire.

In accordance with the implementation provisions of the Abuja Agreement, a six-man Council of State, under the chairmanship of Professor Wilton Sankawulo, was installed in Monrovia on 1 September 1995 as a Transitional Government, under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), with the President of the Republic of Ghana and Chairman of the ECOWAS, His Excellency Flight Lieutenant Jerry John Rawlings, doing the honours. Present at this emotion-filled and colourful ceremony were representatives of the other Heads of State and Government of the West African subregion: President C. Banana, Organization of African Unity (OAU) Eminent Person in Liberia; Ambassador Dane Smith, President Clinton's Special Envoy for Liberia; and Ambassador Nyakyi, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Liberia.

After many false starts and failures, the six-year old Liberian civil war, with its devastating impact on the people of Liberia and the ruinous destruction of the country's physical infrastructure, is finally being brought to an end. We at long last can see the light at the end of the tunnel.

The States of the West African subregion, themselves in dire economic straits, have borne an enormous burden in trying to contain the Liberian civil war and to bring peace to that suffering land. Nigeria and Ghana, especially, have felt compelled to make great sacrifices to bring the Liberian situation to where it is today. Our countries are now exhausted.

Thus it is that the United Nations must now assume its rightful duty in marshalling the financial and material resources needed to turn the hope of a permanent peace and ordered civil life in Liberia into reality. Thus it is that the international community must now shoulder its responsibility towards Liberia.

It is crucial that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNOMIL significantly. But beyond this is the Council's added duty to give support for any measures proposed by the Secretary-General to obtain the necessary resources for the tasks ahead. These tasks include the augmentation of the troop strength of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in a very significant way to enable the force to fulfil its mandate to deploy ECOMOG's forces throughout Liberia; seal all the borders of Liberia; man all entry points by land, sea or air in order to ensure that no arms or ammunition are brought into Liberia; encamp and disarm combatants of all factions; establish roadblocks to check the movement of arms and assist in directing refugees and internally displaced persons; carry out intensive patrols throughout the country; and carry out confidence patrols to create an atmosphere conducive to the holding of free and fair elections.

The process of disarming the combatants is to be carried out by ECOMOG in conjunction with UNOMIL and in collaboration with the Transitional Government. The deployment of ECOMOG and UNOMIL, which is to take place from 2 October to 17 November 1995, is to be preceded by the disengagement of the warring forces from 5 September to 26 September 1995. Combatants are to be moved into assembly and encampment sites from 9 November to 31 December 1995, with disarmament starting on 1 December 1995.

The estimated financial outlay required by ECOMOG to fulfil this mandate is $90,588,960. The details of that outlay have been previously submitted to

the United Nations. UNOMIL, for its part, would need some $62,894,776 for this assignment. The total requirements for Liberia will thus be about $153 million. In order not to take the time of the Council, I am annexing the details of these requirements to this statement, which, I trust, will form part of the documents of the Security Council on this issue.

President Rawlings, as Chairman of the ECOWAS, has just communicated with the Secretary-General on this matter. I quote part of his fervent appeal as follows:

> "the Liberian peace process has now entered the most sensitive stages of disengagement, encampment, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life. The life and security of each Liberian would be dependent on the successful implementation of these programmes. These programmes would demand the provision of material and financial resources to, and logistical support for, ECOMOG and Liberia. It is my ardent hope that you would come to our aid by convincing the United Nations to assume a more active role in pursuing peace in Liberia, by urgently making available the resources I have just mentioned ... The urgency surrounding these requests is based on the need to preserve the positive momentum for peace among Liberians generated by the Abuja Peace Accord. Once that momentum is lost, we would have an uphill task in protecting the peace of Liberia."

With tenacity and consistency we are, in Liberia, on the verge of achieving a great victory for the international community and realizing the hope embodied in the Charter. Ghana appeals to members of the Security Council to meet their responsibility.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Wisseh (Liberia) took a place at the Council table.

The President: I call on the representative of Liberia.

Mr. Wisseh (Liberia): I should like to convey to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September 1995. We have every confidence that your skilful handling of the Council's work thus far will register further achievements during your tenure of office. To your distinguished predecessor, the Ambassador of Indonesia, we offer our appreciation for the effective manner in which he steered the deliberations of the Council during the past month.

Allow me also to extend the sincere gratitude of the Liberian delegation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for the keen interest he continues to manifest in the search for durable peace in Liberia. In pursuance thereof, he has consistently recommended that the United Nations remain engaged in Liberia. His detailed and insightful twelfth progress report on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), contained in document S/1995/781, which forms the basis of this meeting, gives an account of the gains that have been made in the peace process and proposes specific actions for the Council to take in order to ensure that the current momentum towards a final resolution of the Liberian conflict is maintained.

To the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), who took the bold, decisive action — underpinned by humanitarian considerations — to rescue Liberia and its people from the carnage that erupted in 1990, we remain most grateful. Through this concrete demonstration of African brotherhood and solidarity, they gave true meaning to the biblical injunction that we should be our brothers' keepers. With the dispatch of peace-keeping troops, supported almost entirely from the meagre resources of their countries, they offered the blood, sweat and tears of their people so that Liberians might have a peaceful alternative to war. When unwholesome incidents threatened to derail the peace process, the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) gallantly proved its military mettle by thwarting those designs.

Certainly, ECOMOG's presence in Liberia is not without the frustrations and humiliations that usually accompany such operations. Yet, through wise political decision, ECOWAS stayed the course. And now, after years of painstaking diplomacy, the cumulative results of several peace agreements have led to the signing of the Abuja Agreement, which amends and supplements the Cotonou and Akosombo Agreements, as subsequently clarified by the Accra Agreement.

This Agreement is being implemented and offers better prospects for a final peaceful resolution of the Liberian crisis. In this connection, the Liberian delegation commends the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Jerry J. Rawlings of Ghana, for employing his finest diplomatic skills in nudging the factional leaders to a harmonization of their differences, which, *inter alia*, facilitated the Abuja Agreement. We also commend the Government of Nigeria for its significant contributions to the negotiations and for hosting the meeting. The Special

Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Anthony Nyakyi, and the Reverend Canaan Banana, the Eminent Person of the Organization of African Unity, deserve praise for their role as facilitators.

The Liberian delegation believes that one of the crowning successes of the involvement of ECOWAS in Liberia will be the restoration of peace and stability in the West African subregion. This will enable ECOWAS to pursue its goal of economic integration of the region.

It is recalled that in resolution 1001 (1995) of 30 June 1995, the Security Council set a number of conditions for the extension of UNOMIL's mandate. Among other things, the Council required the Liberian parties to make serious and substantial progress towards the implementation of the Akosombo and Accra Agreements and urged that the Council of State be installed that a comprehensive and effective cease-fire be re-established and that the parties commence the disengagement of their forces.

Within this context, and in accordance with the Abuja Agreement signed by the parties on 19 August 1995, the Council of State was installed on 1 September 1995. The Cabinet has been appointed and is governing the country. The cease-fire re-established on 26 August is generally holding, despite minor skirmishes in Lofa County, where the situation is being addressed by the Joint Cease-fire Committee.

Against this background, Liberians are more hopeful than ever that five years of war are receding into the past. The guns are silent and freedom of movement can be had. The nation as a whole is engaged in the delicate task of healing the bitter wounds wrought by the war, in order to foster genuine reconciliation, unity and stability.

Additionally, the Government is devising strategies to launch the revival of the economy. In the short term, it is endeavouring to meet the food and health needs of the population, to reopen schools in areas that are now accessible and under its control, and to restore electric power, potable water and other social amenities to the capital. Discussions are being held on the key issue of the reintegration of former combatants into civil society.

As regards the long-term development of the country, private investors are being encouraged to return to help in the revitalization of the private sector of the economy. In this undertaking, Liberia will, for the foreseeable future, need substantial foreign assistance.

However, all of these efforts can be pursued only in an atmosphere of sustained peace and security. The Government is therefore working in concert with the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG) and UNOMIL to implement, in a timely manner, the crucial elements of disarmament and demobilization of combatants, as stipulated in all of the relevant Agreements. We join in the appeal that ECOMOG be provided additional resources and other logistical support in order for it to execute its mandate.

For five years ECOWAS has borne a substantial burden to maintain its presence in Liberia. And in keeping with Article 52 of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, which encourages regional arrangements in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council, through the creation and dispatch of UNOMIL, has complemented the efforts of ECOWAS. UNOMIL's involvement in the peace process has inspired confidence among Liberians that the international community is attentive to and supportive of their desire to restore peace and normality in Liberia. Therefore, it is the hope of the Liberian Government and people that the United Nations will provide even more financial support to ECOMOG. For when a democratically elected government is inaugurated in Liberia the cooperation between ECOWAS and the United Nations will indeed be recorded in the annals of the Organization as a unique success story, the lessons of which could be applied to other conflicts in the world.

At this juncture, the Liberian delegation would like to thank all Member States, the specialized agencies of the United Nations and the governmental and non-governmental organizations that have rendered, and continue to render, much-needed humanitarian assistance to alleviate the misery and suffering of the Liberian people.

As the draft resolution provides for the extension of UNOMIL's mandate and contains significant elements, the implementation of which is crucial to the transition from war to peace in Liberia, the Liberian delegation commends it to the Council for unanimous adoption.

The President: I thank the representative of Liberia for his kind words addressed to me.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it, as orally revised, in its provisional form. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Egunsola (Nigeria): Let me begin by wishing, on behalf of my delegation, Ambassador Mérimée of France all the best in his new assignment, and Godspeed.

My delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for his twelfth progress report on the situation in Liberia and the performance of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). The report, in our view, gives a fair account of the developments on the ground since the adoption of resolution 1001 (1995) on 30 June 1995. In that resolution, the Security Council had demanded of the Liberian parties certain conditions which they had to fulfil if UNOMIL's mandate was to be renewed. It further requested of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) leaders a harmonization of their policies on Liberia.

I think it fair to say that a breakthrough in the search for peace in Liberia has occurred following the successful conclusion of the Abuja talks and the Agreement involving the parties, which was signed on 19 August 1995, amending and supplementing the Cotonou and Akosombo Agreements, as subsequently clarified by the Accra Agreement.

As a representative of Nigeria, whose Government and people have made enormous sacrifices in the search for peace in Liberia, I am pleased to note today the significant steps that have been recorded by the Liberian parties under the auspices of ECOWAS. Following the signing of the Abuja Agreement, an effective cease-fire has been established throughout Liberia. The Council of State has been installed and is now functioning. The factions have begun disengaging their forces, and we have a new timetable and schedule of implementation of the Agreements. Furthermore, the improved political and security climate has had a positive impact on the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Prior to the Abuja Agreement, several other agreements were signed and subsequently broken by the parties. Nevertheless, there is a general feeling that there exists a qualitative difference in the attitudes of the parties to the new Agreement and in their commitment to a peaceful settlement. We share this sense of optimism, which is in large part due to the following factors: first, the recognition by the leaders of the various factions that the people of Liberia are genuinely weary of war; and, secondly, the fact that the faction leaders themselves now constitute the Council of State.

None the less, we realize that in spite of these positive developments, the real test of the new commitment to peace by the Liberian parties lies in their readiness to implement the key aspects of the Agreement, particularly disengagement, encampment and disarmament, as provided for in the revised schedule and timetable.

The ECOWAS leaders have played their part, and the Liberian parties have done what the Security Council asked of them. They now wait to see what the international community, particularly the Security Council, is prepared to do in assisting the Liberian parties to implement all their Agreements and to support ECOMOG, the subregional initiative that has the primary responsibility, under the Cotonou and subsequent Agreements, for the implementation of the key aspects of the Agreement. The Secretary-General has rightly observed, in paragraph 40 of his report, that while the success of the peace process in Liberia is primarily dependent upon the goodwill of the Liberian parties, there are several critical elements in this process, which require the full involvement and support of the international community. These include disarmament and demobilization, the reintegration into civilian life of an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 combatants, and assistance to ECOMOG.

ECOMOG has so far been hampered in the performance of its complex task by a lack of financial and logistical resources. Without the necessary resources, ECOMOG cannot deploy across the country to oversee the full implementation of the various aspects of the Abuja Agreement. Response to the Trust Fund set up by the Secretary-General has to date not been very encouraging. While we thank those Member States that have contributed to peace efforts and to the Trust Fund, we have to say that more needs to be done in support of ECOMOG. In this regard, we hope the proposal of the Secretary-General to organize a pledging conference for Liberia, specifically to raise the resources needed by ECOMOG, will soon get off the ground, and we appeal to the international community to respond generously.

Concerning the draft resolution before us, my delegation is happy to go along with the Secretary-General's recommendation for a renewal of UNOMIL's mandate until 31 January 1996. However, we

would have wished for a commitment from the Council at this stage to a restoration of UNOMIL to its full strength as a firm expression of political support and of the commitment of the Council to the Liberian peace process. We note, however, the ongoing discussions between ECOMOG and UNOMIL about a new concept of operation for UNOMIL, including its relationship with ECOMOG, and we look forward to the Secretary-General's recommendation in that regard.

Finally, my delegation's message to the Liberian parties is something that we have said in the past: that all we can do as Member States of the region, and indeed what our collective efforts as members of the international community can do, is to create an enabling environment for negotiation and dialogue among the parties. It is left to them to take advantage of the opportunity thus created to work for peace. They have let many such opportunities slip away, and we urge them not to allow this one to suffer a similar fate.

My delegation will, of course, vote in favour of the draft resolution.

Mr. Legwaila (Botswana): Mr. President, my delegation joins you in regretting the departure of our friend, Ambassador Mérimée. We will miss his friendship, not to mention his sartorial elegance.

The signing of the Abuja Agreement by the Liberian parties and political leaders on 26 August 1995, and the subsequent installation of the Council of State on 1 September, presented those in positions of political leadership in Liberia with an ample opportunity to end the senseless killing and destruction that they had visited upon their country and people for a long time. The spontaneous jubilation in Monrovia during the swearing-in ceremony of the Members of the Council of State was a clear demonstration of the Liberian people's yearning for peace and for their country's return to normalcy. The political leaders and parties have witnessed the true expressions of the wishes of the people of Liberia, and it is only fair that they should heed the will of the people by making concerted efforts to ensure that there are no cease-fire violations. The cease-fire must continue to hold and remain effective in accordance with the clearly expressed wish of the people for a peaceful future. It is important that the parties demonstrate as early as possible their commitment to peace by moving expeditiously to implement the other aspects of the Abuja Agreement to take the peace process to a point of irreversibility.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) has been at the cutting edge of the search for durable peace in Liberia. It remained steadfast in their pursuit of peace in Liberia even in the face of the recalcitrance of the warring Liberian political leaders and the impatience and despair of the international community.

Patience in the pursuit of a noble cause often pays in the end. It is patience that has today resulted in ECOMOG succeeding in delivering a peace agreement so pregnant with promise and, for that matter, a peace agreement struck in the nick of time, when the United Nations was threatening to abandon the people of Liberia to their own fate. My delegation commends the efforts of ECOMOG and, in particular, the crucial role played by the Governments of Ghana and Nigeria. We also commend the facilitating role played by Ambassador Nyakyi, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and the Reverend Banana of Zimbabwe, the Eminent Person of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Resolution 1001 (1995), among other things, called upon States neighbouring Liberia to harmonize their policies in their approach to the situation in Liberia. The resolution also expressed the readiness of the Security Council to restore the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) to its full strength if significant progress was achieved in the peace process. The policies of Liberia's neighbours vis-à-vis the Liberian conflict are in harmony, and the Liberian parties have done exactly what the international community demanded of them. An opportunity for durable peace now exists in Liberia, and the Security Council should not be found wanting in rendering assistance to the Liberians to speedily consolidate it. There are numerous challenges which, if not urgently confronted, could reverse the gains which have been made so far. In this regard, UNOMIL must be restored to its full strength, as reflected in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution before us. This is not only in line with the language of operative paragraph 6 of resolution 1001 (1995) of 30 June 1995. It would also be a strong signal to the Liberians that the international community stands ready to help them if they are willing to resolve their own differences.

ECOMOG has a major role to play in monitoring the cease-fire and in the disarmament and demobilisation of the combatants. My delegation fully shares the sentiments reflected in operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution, and wishes to express the hope that the

international community will respond positively and concretely by providing financial and logistical support to the subregional peace-keeping operation, ECOMOG, to enable it to end the war in Liberia once and for all.

The months ahead will be very important in managing and nurturing the nascent peace process in Liberia. There are enormous humanitarian problems that need urgent attention. The Secretary-General's report before us indicates that out of an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 combatants, 25 per cent are children. There are 450,000 internally displaced persons. Some 800,000 Liberians are refugees. These are problems which are at the very core of the peace process in Liberia. We therefore look forward to the outcome of the Secretary-General's consultations with the Chairman of ECOWAS and to his recommendations on the possibility of holding a pledging conference for Liberia. In this respect, we very much welcome the language of operative paragraphs 8 and 14 of the draft resolution.

The Secretary-General has reminded us that since 1989, at least 10 peace agreements have been signed and broken. He has, however, expressed optimism that the prospects for peace are better this time than ever before. My delegation is convinced that the Liberian political parties and leaders have the primary responsibility to give practical expression and credence to the words of the Secretary-General. They are in essence an expression of the hopes and aspirations of the people of Liberia and the international community as a whole.

Mr. Thayeb (Indonesia): Mr. President, may I first of all associate myself with earlier speakers in expressing my delegation's congratulations to Ambassador Mérimée on his appointment as France's representative to Italy, and to extend to him our best wishes.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his informative report (S/1995/781), the twelfth in the series of progress reports on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia. We would also like to express appreciation to the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Anthony Nyakyi, as well as to the leaders of the member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for their untiring efforts to bring about peace in Liberia. In this context, we commend the meeting of Liberian factions held in Abuja last August which culminated in the signing of the Abuja Agreement. We also recognize the hard work of the Liberian parties, the Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the Liberian National Transitional Government, in contributing to the peace process.

My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us today, which decides to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) until 31 January 1996. We believe this draft resolution, initiated by the caucus, arrives at a very critical time in the peace process in Liberia. We are cognizant of the fact that 10 prior peace agreements have been signed and broken since hostilities broke out between warring factions in 1989. However, we are confident that the circumstances that prevail in Liberia at this time warrant an extension of the UNOMIL mandate.

We find the developments over the past several months in Liberia very encouraging. While much progress has been made, we feel that much more needs to be accomplished if lasting peace is to take hold. My delegation is confident that this proposed resolution clearly stipulates the need for the continued integrated international, regional and intergovernmental cooperation that this protracted crisis requires.

My delegation is particularly supportive of the draft resolution's call for post-conflict peace-building. Without such efforts to encourage and provide electoral assistance and to facilitate the reconstruction of Liberia's economic infrastructure and institutions, a secure peace will be very much in doubt.

The Indonesian delegation wishes urgently to reiterate the draft resolution's call on the international community to fulfil their respective financial obligations without hesitation. The current efforts by ECOMOG and other relevant United Nations agencies require considerable financial resources to ensure an uninterrupted implementation of the peace settlement. Without these financial commitments, the vast work that lies ahead will be delayed and contribute to further destabilization.

We have every confidence that the draft resolution will be conducive to the continued cooperation and goodwill established by the Liberian parties that is essential to the successful outcome of this crisis. We believe the mandates of the draft resolution foster the objective of national reconciliation while respecting Liberia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

My delegation appreciates the support and resolve of the international community, as demonstrated by the draft

resolution, in their efforts to end this terrible and tragic conflict, which has inflicted so much suffering throughout the region. We are confident that the full implementation of the draft resolution will present the possibility for Liberia to put this tragic war behind it and move forward into the next century with a sense of hope, security, confidence, and prosperity.

Mr. Martínez Blanco (Honduras) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation wishes to associate itself with your expressions of regret, Mr. President, over the departure of Ambassador Mérimée of France. We wish him every success in his new diplomatic post.

My delegation is grateful to the Secretary-General for submitting the twelfth progress report on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). We welcomed the fact that, following the conclusion of the Abuja Agreement on 19 August this year, the parties have created the Council of State and re-established a complete cease-fire, which is being respected. We are also gratified to know that, now that a timetable for the implementation of the provisions of the peace Agreement has been agreed, from the cease-fire to the holding of elections, the parties have begun the process of separation of forces.

These are encouraging events, because it seems they have dispelled the concerns that we expressed in the past at the lack of determination of the Liberian parties to fulfil their commitments and of the Liberian people to put an end to the war. My delegation is convinced that the constant demands of the international community that the faction leaders put an end to the conflict and to the suffering of the Liberian people have facilitated the palpable progress in the peace process which the Secretary-General describes in his report. It is right to recognize the valuable efforts made by the members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to push the peace process forward in Liberia and to see to it that, with a view to peace, stability and national reconciliation, the parties pledge to sign the Cotonou, Akosombo and Accra Agreements.

The presence in Liberia of the cease-fire Monitoring Group and of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) also deserves our appreciation. Without their action, the history of Liberia would be different today. We also commend the tireless efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to facilitate the peace process.

We share the observation of the Secretary-General that, in spite of the signing of the Abuja Agreement and the assistance that the United Nations and the international community can give to the parties to implement it, the parties themselves must show with deeds their will to maintain peace. Although the signing of that Agreement represents substantial progress in the implementation of the Akosombo and Accra Agreements, in the final analysis it is the responsibility of the Liberian factions and political leaders to find a definitive solution to the political crisis and, to that end, to take advantage of the current positive stage in the peace process.

The Liberian parties still have a number of tasks to accomplish in accordance with the timetable for the implementation of the peace Agreement, such as the separation, disarmament and demobilization of their forces. We therefore believe that the presence of UNOMIL is necessary, and we will therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution, which extends its mandate until 31 January 1996.

Lastly, in order to back the peace process and the implementation of the commitments undertaken by virtue of the Agreement, the international community must provide all the material assistance that it can, either bilaterally or through the Trust Fund for Liberia.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: The Chinese delegation welcomes the presence of the Secretary-General at our meeting.

There is a saying that every road leads to Rome. We hope that in the near future we will all meet in Rome and, together with Ambassador Mérimée, enjoy the hospitality of the Italian Government and the Italian people.

There have recently been encouraging developments in the situation in Liberia, as evidenced by the signing by the conflicting parties of an Agreement on a comprehensive cease-fire and the establishment of the Council of State, in Abuja on 19 August. The signing of the Abuja Agreement represents an important step forward by the parties in the peace process, and the Chinese delegation warmly welcomes this event.

We are pleased to note that the Transitional Government established thereafter has won the support of the leaders of all parties and that of the general public. The parties to the conflict have ordered their respective

forces to lay down their arms, the disengagement of these forces has started, and the cease-fire appears to be holding.

The various parties have been fighting and talking for as long as five years since the outbreak of the civil war in Liberia in 1989. Fighting has wrecked Liberia's economy, killed hundreds of thousands of people and made hundreds of thousands of others refugees. Therefore, bringing an early end to the civil war so as to restore stability and tranquillity in the country is in keeping with the general trend and reflects the will of the people.

We are of the view that the peace process in Liberia has proved that only when the parties concerned demonstrate good will for a political settlement and readiness to truly give up war and persist in peaceful negotiations can there be a momentum of peace to transform hostility into friendship. In conflicts in certain regions, particularly those between various parties within a country, peace cannot be brought about by mandatory means or be imposed from outside.

We are also of the view that the active participation of the international community, particularly regional organizations, in the mediation and peace-keeping activities has also facilitated the peace process in Liberia. We especially appreciate the untiring efforts and important role of Nigeria and Ghana in this regard.

In view of the positive changes in the present situation in Liberia, the Secretary-General has recommended that the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) be extended to 31 January 1996. The Chinese delegation wishes to associate itself with this recommendation and will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

The road to peace in Liberia will not be a smooth one, since the outstanding issues are very complicated. Therefore, in order to achieve national reconciliation all parties in Liberia will still have to make arduous efforts. We sincerely hope that the various parties will continue to channel their renewed efforts towards the peace process so that the reconstruction of the country can begin soon and the people there can resume a normal life.

Mr. Kovanda (Czech Republic): My delegation, too, will miss our dear neighbour, Ambassador Mérimée, that paragon of diplomatic skill, unfailing *courtoisie*, sartorial excellence and *la francophonie*. We wish him all the best in Rome.

A year ago a Security Council mission visited Mozambique to see what more the Security Council could do to help implement an agreement between belligerents there, an agreement that pulled the country out of years of civil war. I had the honour to serve on that mission. We witnessed processes of demobilization and voter registration which eventually culminated in free elections. The United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) peace-keeping operation is today a term in United Nations history. Fortunately, it is a term denoting success.

The success of Mozambique and of ONUMOZ is a shining example. Our experience there should be studied and its success factors distilled and applied wherever else they are applicable. Liberia seems to offer a chance for applying these lessons.

The first building blocks of a lasting peace have at long last been put in place. At long last all the main factions of the civil war there have installed a Council of State and have agreed on a process of disengagement, encampment, disarmament and demobilization and, finally, on preparations for elections to be held next 20 August.

The devil is in the details. The implementation of this plan will surely run into any number of logistical difficulties and into the occasional unwillingness of this party or that, or of their local followers, to take this or that concrete step. There will be ample opportunity for local flare-ups, and heaven knows there is an ample supply of arms in the country.

This is where the Mozambique example comes into play. In it we can find inspiration as to how to wrestle to the ground the devil of the details.

Even so, today's success is tremendous, and we congratulate the parties themselves. We congratulate the countries of the Economic Community of West African States, which have been shouldering the tremendous burden of fielding the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), and most certainly we congratulate the statesmen of Ghana and of Nigeria for their steadfastness and singularity of purpose, which have been so appropriately crowned with success.

My delegation wholeheartedly supports the draft resolution before us. The Czech Republic has been making its own modest contribution to the peace process in Liberia. Ours is the only European country which has

fielded a certain number of military observers to take part in the work of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), as, indeed, our observers took part in Mozambique. My authorities are currently studying a request to further augment the number of our observers serving in Liberia.

We hope that the people of Liberia and their leaders will stay firmly on the course they have outlined for themselves for Liberia to emerge yet again as a bastion of peace in Western Africa.

Mr. Al-Sameen (Oman) (*interpretation from Arabic*): Since this is the first time I have addressed the Council under your presidency, Sir, allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to extend sincerest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. There can be no doubt that your diplomatic skills and knowledge of the issues will greatly enrich our work and help us achieve the expected results.

I also wish to pay tribute to your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, and to the members of his delegation for the exemplary way in which they conducted the work of the Council last month.

I should also like to associate myself with the eloquent words that you, Mr. President, addressed to the Ambassador of France, who is closing out his assignment, as the Permanent Representative of his country, on the Council. I feel that you were speaking for all the members of the Council in this regard.

I should like straight away to express my delegation's sincerest thanks to the Secretary-General for his submission of a complete report, dated 9 September 1995, the twelfth in the series of progress reports on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). We also wish to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for Liberia, Mr. Nyakyi, as well as to the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), especially the leaders of Nigeria and Ghana, for their tireless and unceasing efforts to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Liberia.

My delegation is pleased to see that the responsibilities set out in resolution 1001 (1995) of 30 June 1995 have to a great extent been met. In our opinion, the peace process in Liberia has recently shown signs of the progress which we have long awaited. The Abuja negotiations culminated in the signing by the Liberian factions on 19 August of an Agreement which stipulated the parties' commitment to restoring and respecting the cease-fire and to establishing a new Council of State that would lead the country towards elections to be held next August. This Agreement also provided a timetable for its implementation.

My delegation is gratified by these important events, which allow us to hope that a peaceful solution will be found to the Liberian conflict. It is true that the Secretary-General, in his report which forms the basis of today's draft resolution, informs us that at least 10 peace agreements had already been signed and abandoned by the leaders of the warring Liberian factions since 1989. Nevertheless, we have considerable grounds for optimism, since the leaders are now determined to end the civil war that has engulfed their country over the past six years. It seems that this time they will not, as they have done in the past, allow this unique opportunity to restore peace to the country to elude them.

My delegation is therefore pleased with the draft resolution which we are about to adopt, which extends the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), in accordance with the Secretary-General's recommendation, for a period of four additional months to 31 January 1996. The goal is to enable the Mission to help monitor observance of the terms of the Abuja Agreement in accordance with the agreed timetable.

My delegation eagerly awaits the report which the Secretary-General intends to submit to the Council in October. We are also eager to see the report's recommendations on the new concept of operations. We hope that the report will register further progress in the implementation by the Liberian factions of the peace process in their country.

In conclusion, aware as we are of UNOMIL's role in the area of cooperation with the Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in monitoring the Liberian parties' observance of the Abuja Agreement, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution before us.

The President: I thank the representative of Oman for his kind words addressed to me.

There are no more requests from delegations to speak before the voting. I shall therefore now put to the

vote draft resolution S/1995/790, as orally revised in its provisional form.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Argentina, Botswana, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution, as orally revised in its provisional form, has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1014 (1995).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): Let me join my colleagues as they wish Ambassador Mérimée Godspeed and tell him how much we are going to miss his presence here.

The war and devastation of Liberia is a tragedy which has for too long plagued the people of that poor country and their neighbours in the subregion. But in recent weeks agreement of the warring factions has renewed the hope for peace.

The United States warmly welcomes these positive developments in Liberia. If we recall the situation the last time the Council considered this topic, we can see substantial progress. We commend the efforts of the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in particular Ghana and Nigeria, as well as those of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the Organization of African Unity, all of whom have advanced the peace process to this point.

The adoption of this resolution renewing the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) signals the Council's recognition that the warring factions in Liberia have taken the important steps necessary to put their peace process back on the track. Without that, the United States could not have endorsed further support of the United Nations Observer Mission at this time. But there is still a long way to go.

We urge the new Liberian Transitional Government to build on the steps already taken so that the peace thus far achieved will be lasting. This will require a commitment by all sides to find negotiated solutions to the problems that will inevitably arise during implementation of the peace accord. The arms embargo on Liberia declared by the Security Council must be strictly enforced. The Liberian factions and people must keep in mind, as today's resolution reiterates, that continuing international support, including the participation of UNOMIL, is contingent on their demonstrating through actions their commitment to peacefully resolve their differences. Above all, the current cease-fire must be strictly observed by all sides.

The resolution which we have adopted today not only supports the Secretary-General's immediate recommendations, but also lays the groundwork for further changes and improvements in UNOMIL and its relationship with the Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of ECOWAS. We look forward to the report of the Secretary-General at the end of October and intend to review carefully his specific recommendations at that time. We believe that it would be premature to make further changes, particularly in the number of United Nations observers, until the Council has the opportunity to review those recommendations.

Liberia will need the continued assistance of the international community to re-establish the social and institutional fabric of its society. The United States has already contributed millions of dollars in humanitarian assistance. ECOMOG, the regional peace-keeping force, is also in need of assistance to better carry out its mandate. The United States has already contributed $20 million for its support. We encourage others in the international community to provide the needed help to the people of Liberia and their neighbours to ensure that the fragile shoot of peace in Liberia grows into full flower.

Mr. Henze (German) (*interpretation from French*): First of all, Mr. President, I should like to associate myself with your expression of farewell to Ambassador Mérimée. We view his departure with great regret. His broad-ranging experience and wisdom helped us a great deal in our work — and not only in the Council. We hope that in Rome he will find a somewhat less turbulent landscape than at the United Nations, and that there he will be able to take vacations with no fear of being called back to the Council.

(spoke in English)

Germany voted in favour of extending the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) until 31 January 1996. There is reason to

hope that the peace process will make substantive progress until that date. We also hope that the Abuja Agreement will prove to be a lasting foundation for a peace settlement in Liberia.

The installation of the Council of State and the re-establishment of a comprehensive cease-fire are important first steps, which we welcome. The inclusion of the leaders of the warring parties in the provisional government should provide the basis for a continuation of the peace process.

International assistance will be necessary to sustain the peace process, especially within the framework of demobilization of the armed units and to re-establish an economic foundation for Liberia's further development. Depending on a further improvement of the security situation, increased humanitarian assistance will, hopefully, be an additional stabilizing factor.

The warring parties will have to provide further proof of their sincere commitment to the peace process by abiding strictly by their commitments under the Abuja Agreement. Only under this condition can international assistance for the peace process be maintained.

The continued United Nations engagement therefore also depends on the Secretary-General's report to the Council, by the end of October, and his conclusions on the future concept of UNOMIL's operations. It is the understanding of my Government that the Council will at that time have to reconsider UNOMIL's options in Liberia, in the light of progress made in the peace process.

In conclusion, my Government would like to express its gratitude to the Member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and particularly Ghana and Nigeria. In the end, it was their will to harmonize their policies on Liberia that was instrumental in reaching the Abuja Agreement and in attaining the progress we are seeing now. They are called upon to continue their political efforts and their commitment through their presence in the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG). That and further improved coordination with UNOMIL will, hopefully, yield the necessary help to the people of Liberia to achieve peace and reconciliation.

Mr. Thiebaud (France) (*interpretation from French*): It is with satisfaction that my delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution.

In its resolution 1001 (1995) of 30 June 1995, the Security Council set extremely stringent conditions which the Liberian parties were to meet rapidly if they wanted the United Nations to remain lastingly involved in the settlement of the conflict in Liberia.

When that resolution was adopted, few countries believed that after the resumption of the civil war the various Liberian factions would be able to reach an agreement that would set the peace process back on track. France at that time firmly advocated giving time to the Liberians.

Events have proved us right. On 19 August 1995 the Liberian factions signed in Abuja a complete Agreement covering all the demands of the Security Council, making it possible once again seriously to envisage the return of peace to that country, which had just entered its sixth year of civil war.

It is always a pleasure for my delegation to receive good news from Africa. The events that have just occurred in Liberia make us optimistic once again. Following the Abuja Agreement, a cease-fire has been established, a Council of State has been installed, and a complete timetable for the implementation of all other aspects of the Agreement has been accepted. Lastly, the military disengagement of the various factions is reportedly now under way.

The Secretary-General also tells us that tens of thousands of refugees are voluntarily returning to their country. It is therefore necessary, above and beyond the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), for the United Nations to be further involved in Liberia.

This involvement relates, first of all, to the United Nations operation, which was established by the Council in 1993. We are delighted that the Secretary-General envisages an increase in its numbers in order to monitor respect for the commitments undertaken by the Liberian factions at Abuja. My delegation also awaits with interest the report that the Secretary-General is to submit to the Council on the new concept of UNOMIL's operations, especially in the context of enhancing the relationship between UNOMIL and the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG).

This involvement also relates to humanitarian aspects. We are pleased in this respect that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has decided to dispatch a mission to examine the logistics for the return of the 850,000 persons that fled their country because of the war.

The involvement of the international community should, lastly, extend to the economic sphere. The implementation of the peace Agreement should, we believe, be accompanied by a greater involvement of international financial institutions, whose assistance could be decisive in the implementation of troop demobilization, on which the restoration of peace depends.

In conclusion, my delegation would like warmly to thank those countries that made special efforts so that the Liberians would not be left to their own devices. We hope that the prospects opened up by the signing of the Abuja Agreement will make it possible for the Liberian people to set out again, without further delay, on the path of democracy, progress and development.

May I add that I shall convey to Ambassador Mérimée the extremely kind words which the members of the Council have addressed to him on the occasion of his departure and the wishes expressed to him for the success of his mission in Rome. He will, of course, be very touched by those wishes.

Mr. Shkourko (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian delegation would like to join in the warm congratulations to the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations, Ambassador Mérimée, on his new appointment in Rome. We wish him every success in this responsible post.

We note with deep satisfaction that the Liberian parties have finally heeded the aspirations of the people of Liberia and the numerous appeals of the international community, and have begun constructive cooperation in order to put an end to six years of fratricidal war, which has brought countless sufferings to the population of that country.

We welcome the Agreement recently signed in Abuja, which is a clear victory for common sense and a major political success for the countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Organization of African Unity, and which is of important significance for stabilizing the situation in Liberia and in the subregion as a whole. It should be pointed out that the process, which has taken on a positive dynamic for a peaceful settlement in Liberia, is a good precedent for successful joint efforts in Africa for the United Nations and regional structures.

It is exceedingly important that the peace process in Liberia enjoy the support of all the key political leaders of the country and be based on the sympathy of broad sections of the population and also on the agreed policy of the member States of ECOWAS. This encourages us as never before to have great hopes for the re-establishment of peace in Liberia.

The resolution just adopted unanimously by the Security Council clearly urges the Liberian parties to comply with the obligations they have entered into and gives a strong political impulse to support for efforts at making progress in the peace process and at national reconciliation in Liberia.

Of special significance is the task of enhancing the effectiveness of cooperation between ECOMOG and the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) as one of the linchpins of a new concept of United Nations operations in Liberia. As we understand it, the Secretary-General intends to report on the basic parameters of this concept for consideration by the Security Council in October this year. We believe that the formulation of this concept, including aspects of financial, material and technical support by the international community for the peace process in Liberia, requires a realistic, weighted approach based on the provisions of previous Security Council resolutions.

The Russian delegation is firmly convinced that a lasting political settlement and national reconciliation cannot be imposed by methods of force, either in Liberia or in any other country. The key to the success of the peace process in Liberia is to be found in the hands of the Liberians themselves. We venture to hope that the current leaders of that country will have enough political will and wisdom to be able, through their joint efforts, to bring their people out of the vicious circle of violence and bloodshed. The task of the international community, in our view, is to provide appropriate support and cooperation.

Ms. Cañas (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: My delegation also wants to express its best wishes to Ambassador Mérimée for his future work in Rome, and to convey to him how much we will miss his presence among us in the Security Council.

We are pleased to observe the political events that have taken place with respect to the situation in Liberia, and which have culminated in the signing of the Abuja Agreement, the entry into force of a cease-fire and the establishment of the Council of State.

We are aware that this is not the first agreement signed by the Liberian parties, and we recall the failures of the past. None the less, we trust that the new circumstances surrounding this Agreement, that is, the direct participation of the leaders of the factions in the Council of State, the new attitude displayed by the factions and the harmonization of the policies of the neighbouring countries with respect to Liberia, all establish a clear distinction between the Abuja Agreement and its predecessors.

We want to express our appreciation to the Governments of Ghana and Nigeria for their important role in the successful conclusion of the Abuja Agreement. This vital first step, which has been taken after so much time and so much violence must be consolidated and maintained so that democratic elections can indeed be held next year in Liberia.

There is no doubt that ultimate responsibility for success in this new approach lies primarily with the Liberians themselves, and depends on their conduct. Nonetheless, we believe that the support of the international community will contribute to the achievement of success in the difficult efforts to achieve lasting peace in Liberia.

It is within the framework of that support that we consider it essential that UNOMIL remain and be steadily strengthened. For this reason we support the extension of its mandate for four months, the increase in the number of its military observers and the review of its concept of operations in order to adapt it to new circumstances and include in it aspects relating to disarmament and demobilization.

The exercise of UNOMIL's mandate is closely related to ECOMOG's ability to carry out its own mandate and to ensure security. We therefore hope that the forthcoming pledging conference, which the Secretary-General plans to convene in order to obtain the resources necessary for ECOMOG and to meet other needs of critical importance for the peace process, will meet with a prompt and generous response on the part of the international community.

We also wish to emphasize the enormous importance that we attach to strengthening to the utmost coordination between UNOMIL and ECOMOG. This will yield the positive experience of cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization.

During the coming four months, the Liberian parties will have to focus on beginning to achieve concrete results in the difficult process of the separation, disarmament and demobilization of their forces and their reintegration into civil life. For this purpose, we believe that they must be assured of the support of this Organization. However, the Liberian leaders must be very much aware that another failure in the fulfilment of their commitments will inevitably lead to a review of that support.

The humanitarian situation, which is particularly difficult, the observance of human rights, which can neither be renounced nor evaded, and the capacity of the local police to be effective, impartial and professional, are all important issues which must be addressed, on a priority basis, and for which we will also support efforts to show the commitment and the support of the international community.

Mr. Arkwright (United Kingdom): Like other speakers before me, and on behalf of all of us in the British delegation, I should like to pay tribute to Ambassador Mérimée, with whom we have all worked so closely, and whose contribution to the work of the Security Council has been immeasurable. We wish him *bon voyage* and *bonne chance* in Rome.

The resolution we have just adopted marks what we hope will be a turning point for the long-suffering Liberian people. The Abuja Agreement signed last month gives grounds for cautious optimism. Prospects for peace in Liberia appear to be better than at any time since the war started. My delegation welcomes in particular the establishment of a broad-based Council of State and the presence in Monrovia of representatives of all the Liberian factions.

We are concerned, however, about recent reports of violations of the cease-fire. We call on all parties to respect that cease-fire.

The Council's decision to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL)

until 31 January 1996 will give the factions time to demonstrate their commitment to the Abuja Agreement. It is vital that they make use of this limited period to demonstrate clearly their commitment to a genuine peace by proceeding with implementation of the Abuja provisions on disarmament, demobilization and steps towards free and fair elections in 1996.

My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to increase immediately the number of military observers in UNOMIL. We hope that they will be deployed as soon as possible. We look forward to the Secretary-General's presentation of a new concept of operations for UNOMIL. As he recognizes, improved and effective cooperation between UNOMIL and the Cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG) will be the key to the success of both missions. We therefore welcome the task force that UNOMIL has established with ECOMOG, the Transitional Government and development agencies to recommend ways forward in the crucial areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants into civilian life.

While the primary responsibility for the reconstruction of their country lies with the Liberian people, the international community will have an important role to play. We urge it to help the Liberians help themselves. The British Government will play its part. But continued international support will depend on further political progress and on the cease-fire holding. Bitter past experience has shown the fragility of peace efforts in Liberia. The Abuja Agreement represents the best chance for peace in a long time. We urge the Liberian people to seize this chance to end the misery which they have suffered for too long.

I should like to conclude by paying tribute to the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, and all the personnel of UNOMIL, as well as to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Community of West African States, in particular its Chairman, President Rawlings. The Abuja Agreement is a good example of the effectiveness of concerted regional efforts to promote peace and stability. The task is now to put it into effect.

Mr. Bakuramutsa (Rwanda) *(interpretation from French):* My delegation would like to wish His Excellency Ambassador Mérimée every success in his new post in Rome. Through various contacts, we have been able to see and appreciate his outstanding human qualities and his diplomatic abilities. My delegation wishes him Godspeed.

My delegation would first of all like to thank the Secretary-General for his twelfth report on the Observer Mission in Liberia. We find its contents to be positive and very encouraging with regard to current developments in Liberia. My delegation welcomes the success of negotiations in Abuja which led to the signing by all parties of an agreement and the setting up a new Council of State for a period of one year until the holding of elections. In this regard, we should like to commend the Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) who were able to bring the various factions to the same table in order to establish this Council of State.

My delegation would also like to congratulate the cease-fire Monitoring Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG), which succeeded in maintaining peace in spite of the scope of the conflict and the meagre means made available to it. The conflict in Liberia and the steps taken to set up a Council of State are further proof of the ability of regional and sub-regional African organizations to put an end to conflicts in the region.

My delegation is convinced that the United Nations, and the Security Council in particular, are not able to put an end to conflict in the region without the participation of regional and sub-regional African organizations. That is why we most earnestly recommend cooperation between the Security Council and the Secretariat and the African regional organizations.

Even though the United Nations functions within a system with a Western bent, Africa remains a continent which has been characterized for many centuries as one of dialogue, and it is important for the Security Council to deal with it as such. It is important that time be given to adversaries to get together to negotiate and solve their own problems. That is why the Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States and ECOMOG were able to start — and have just achieved — something which seemed impossible, in spite of meagre logistical resources and economic difficulties. The United Nations and the international community have a moral obligation to help ECOMOG to carry out its task successfully. We are delighted that the Security Council has agreed to extend the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) so that it may continue to participate in the peace process in Liberia.

We cannot speak of peace in Liberia without talking about development. The demobilization of some tens of thousands of combatants, including children, requires an

enormous economic effort in order to involve these active forces in the economy and ensure schooling for children. This demobilization should be funded by the international community so as to avoid new recruitment of demobilized individuals in other military adventures.

We agree with the recommendations of the Secretary-General regarding UNOMIL's participation in demobilization and disarmament, and also in defining socio-economic areas in which the demobilized combatants might be involved. We fully agree with his recommendation regarding the national police force in order to maintain public order and peace and create a law-abiding State.

We most earnestly call for financial support for ECOMOG, so that it may maintain peace throughout the country and ensure respect for the Abuja Agreement and the proper functioning of the new Council of State which has just been set up.

We would like to conclude by requesting you, Sir, as current President, and all your successors between now and December to fulfil the wish of one member of the Security Council: that African countries no longer appear on the agenda of the Council by the end of 1995. With the help of all, it is possible.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Italy.

The agreement between all the Liberian factions at Abuja on 19 August marks a turning point in the Liberian crisis. The Italian Government wishes to express to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Boutros Ghali, and to his Special Representative in Liberia, its appreciation for their key contribution to, and support of, the Agreement. We hope that it will lead to a final settlement of the deep crisis that has ravaged the country for the last six years.

The war took a huge toll on the country: 150,000 people lost their lives in the endless cycles of violence; 800,000 people were forced to leave the country. But the growing awareness that six years of war had been completely in vain, the plight and weariness of the people, and the deadlock between the factions, set the groundwork for an agreement to be reached.

We share the Secretary-General's assessment in his report that the prospects for peace are perhaps better now than they have been at any time since the outbreak of civil war. The main political leaders are directly participating in the Council of State. The States members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have coordinated their policies towards Liberia, a fundamental factor, we believe, in making the peace Agreement possible. Credit is due first and foremost to Ghana, Chairman-in-Office of ECOWAS, and to Nigeria, which hosted the talks.

The schedule for the implementation of the various stages of the 19 August Agreement is rapid and realistic. Disengagement, disarmament and demobilization of the troops will be crucial, as will be the reintegration of combatants into civilian life.

We are also encouraged by the Secretary-General's report of a significant expansion in humanitarian assistance activities. The economic infrastructure of the country must be rebuilt so that Liberia can once again make full use of its rich natural resources. The international community should not fail to provide the assistance necessary to help set Liberia on the road to recovery.

To conclude, it is our sincere wish and hope that the developments in the upcoming months and the consolidation of the process of national reconciliation, which is still in its infancy, will make it possible for us to remove Liberia once and for all from the agenda of the Security Council.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no further speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 2.10 p.m.